



OFFICE OF TRAVIS COUNTY JUDGE SARAH ECKHARDT

September 1, 2015

Dear fellow Travis County elected officials:

Our Planning and Budget Office and Human Resources Department have been committed to fully funding the results of our cyclical (every 3 year) market salary study. Based on their calculations, the average wage increase is likely to be approximately 3%. Therefore, according to past practice, the Court has voted to establish a ceiling of a 3% increase for elected officials salaries to whom Subchapter B, Chapter 152 of the Texas Local Government Code applies in FY16.

This letter serves as the written notice required by Section 152.013 (c) of the Texas Local Government Code. The maximum amount of the county salary set for each elected official is shown in Attachment A to the order of the Commissioners Court setting these salaries (attached). In addition, I am giving notice to all district, county and precinct elected officials regardless of whether Subchapter B, Chapter 152 of the Texas Local Government Code applies to them. Further, I have posted the Texas Association of Counties' "Salary Survey 2014 Edition for your contextual reference on the Commissioners Court Online Message Board.

Salaries for elected officials to whom Subchapter B applies will by default be raised by 3% unless the official affirmatively chooses a lower salary. Officials also have the opportunity to grieve the 3% ceiling if they feel it is too low. Any elected official or precinct officer or the district clerk who is aggrieved by the salary or personal expense set for that official may request a hearing before the Grievance Committee, as allowed by Section 152.016 of the Texas Local Government Code. This request must be in writing and state the desired change in their salary and personal expense. The deadline to deliver the request for a hearing to the County Judge as the Chairperson of the Grievance Committee is Tuesday, September 8, at 5:00 PM. Elected officials not eligible to submit grievances are listed in Section 152.017 of the Texas Local Government Code.

I have attached an affidavit for your use if you wish to affirmatively choose a lower salary than the one set by Commissioners Court. If you wish to accept a salary at an amount lower than what has been proposed, please return an affidavit to this effect to the County Auditor's Office before October 1. As an example, I will not be taking the suggested 3% increase to my salary. I do not feel a raise is warranted having been in this position for less than a year.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah Eckhardt
County Judge

Public Hearing Item 1 (Action Item 8)



Travis County Commissioners Court Voting Session Agenda Request

Meeting Date: September 1, 2015

Agenda Language:

Receive comments regarding proposed Fiscal Year 2016 salaries of elected officials.

Prepared By/Phone Number: Victoria Ramirez, Planning and Budget, 854-6039

Elected/Appointed Official or Department Head: Jessica Rio, County Executive, Planning and Budget

Commissioners Court Sponsor(s): Commissioner Margaret Gómez

Background/Summary of Request and Attachments:

On August 11, 2015, Commissioners Court approved placement of an advertisement in the *Austin Chronicle* proposing the Fiscal Year 2016 salaries for elected officials. The advertisement appeared in the Thursday, August 20 edition of the *Austin Chronicle*. A copy of the advertisement as it appeared is attached. The advertisement also set the public hearing to accept public comment on the proposed salaries for September 1, 2015 at 9:00 AM.

Staff Recommendations:

The Planning and Budget Office recommends that Commissioners Court consider public comment.

Issues and Opportunities:

PBO notes that the proposed salaries advertised in the *Austin Chronicle* represent the maximum salaries for each office. Any elected official may request that his or her salary be set at a level below this maximum authorization.

Fiscal Impact and Source of Funding:

The ongoing fiscal impact of the recommended 3.0% increase will be \$89,033 including benefits.

Required Authorizations:

Planning and Budget Office
County Judge's Office

Jessica Rio
Joe Hon

AGENDA REQUEST & BACKUP MATERIALS DEADLINE: Agenda requests and backup materials must be submitted in PDF format via email to agenda@traviscountytx.gov by **12 noon on Tuesday** in order to be considered for inclusion in the following week's voting session.

TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS PROPOSED FY 2016 SALARIES

This notice of maximum proposed salaries and allowances for Travis County elected officials during Fiscal Year 2016 is pursuant to section 152.013 of the Texas Local Government Code. A Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2016 salaries and allowances of elected officials will be held on September 1, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. in the Travis County Commissioners Courtroom, 700 Lavaca Street, Austin, Texas. This advertisement reflects the budgeted salaries for the elected officials. All elected officials have the right to decline the salaries set for their office. All persons are invited and may participate in the hearing. Commissioners Court will then set the salaries and allowances of elected officials.

Elected Official ¹	Budgeted FY 2015 Salary	Proposed Change	Proposed FY 2016 Salary
District Judge (State Salary) ^{2,3}	\$140,000.00	\$0	\$140,000.00
District Judge (County Salary) ^{3,4}	<u>\$18,000.00</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$18,000.00</u>
District Judge	\$158,000.00	\$0	\$158,000.00
Court at Law Judge (County Salary) ⁵	\$157,000.00	\$0	\$157,000.00
District Attorney (State Salary) ²	\$140,000.00	\$0	\$140,000.00
District Attorney (County Salary)	<u>\$35,298.00</u>	<u>\$1,059.00</u>	<u>\$36,357.00</u>
District Attorney	\$175,298.00	\$1,059.00	\$176,357.00
Probate Judge (County Salary) ⁶	\$158,000.00	\$4,740.00	\$162,740.00
Justice of the Peace 1-5 ⁷	\$111,936.00	\$3,358.00	\$115,294.00
County Attorney	\$164,734.00	\$4,942.00	\$169,676.00
County Judge ⁸	\$118,373.00	\$3,551.00	\$121,924.00
County Commissioner 1-4	\$98,463.00	\$2,954.00	\$101,417.00
Constable 1-4	\$92,310.00	\$2,769.00	\$95,079.00
Constable 5	\$96,091.00	\$2,883.00	\$98,974.00
Sheriff	\$135,903.00	\$4,077.00	\$139,980.00
District Clerk	\$119,741.00	\$3,592.00	\$123,333.00
County Clerk	\$119,741.00	\$3,592.00	\$123,333.00
Tax Assessor-Collector	\$119,741.00	\$3,592.00	\$123,333.00
County Treasurer	\$95,248.00	\$2,857.00	\$98,105.00

1. Travis County pays for health care coverage for every county employee and elected official. If a county employee or elected official had and continues to have other health coverage and has continuously declined this county coverage since September 30, 2003, that person may receive an additional \$184.86 per month. This amount may, at that person's option, be added to their total annual Fiscal Year 2016 salary or placed in an IRS approved flexible spending account for the reimbursement of health care or dependent care expenses.

2. The State Salary is the least state compensation received by any of these officials. If these officials have been employed by the state continuously since August 31, 1995, they also receive \$1,026.86 as a "benefit replacement pay" supplement. The Legislature specifically said that this supplement is not "salary," but it is included in the total amount received by these officials for purposes of comparing the salaries of other elected officials. The state salary was last increased for these officials in Fiscal Year 2014.

3. Effective September 1, 2007, if these officials who have been an active judge and a member of the Judicial Retirement System of Texas Plan One or Two for at least 16 years, they also receive \$4,340.00 as "judicial longevity pay" from the state. Effective September 1, 2009, if these officials have been active as a County Court at Law or District Judge for a combined total of at least 16 years but are not eligible for state judicial longevity pay, they receive \$4,340.00 as "judicial longevity pay" from the county.

4. Effective October 1, 2010, the District Judge elected as Administrative Judge for Criminal Courts can be and has been compensated \$5,000 for the additional administrative duties involved.

5. The County Salary is the least compensation received by any of these officials. If these officials have been an active County Court at Law Judge in Travis County for at least 16 years, a supplement of \$4,340.00 based on judicial longevity is added to and part of the salary of these officials.

6. In addition to County Salary, Government Code § 25.023 says the Commissioners Court must pay the Probate Judge \$4,340.00 as judicial longevity because he has been an active Probate Judge in Travis County for at least 16 years. Since January 1, 2015, the Probate Judge has been elected and serving as the Presiding Judge of the Statutory Probate Judges of Texas. For the additional duties as Presiding Judge, he receives \$33,000 each year.

7. The County Salary is the least compensation received by any of these officials. An annual supplement of \$3,255.12 based on judicial longevity is added to and part of the salary of these officials if the official has been an active justice of the peace in Travis County for at least 16 years. For officials who will have been an active justice of the peace in Travis County for at least 16 years effective January 1, 2016, a supplement of \$2,441.34 based on judicial longevity is added to and part of their salary from January 1, 2016 until the end of the fiscal year.

8. This includes \$4,800 paid for service on the Travis County Juvenile Board.

Affidavit of Salary Donation
Texas Local Government Code, sections 152.002 and 152.052

On oath and under penalty of perjury, I swear that the following statements are true:

1. My name is _____.
2. I am at least eighteen years of age.
3. I am _____ in Travis County, Texas, and as such am an elected official.
(position held)
4. I elect to reduce the amount of my services to an annualized total of \$_____ for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, _____.
5. I understand that the effective date of this affidavit will be the later of October, 1, _____ and the date on which it is filed with the county auditor. If filed later than October 1, _____, the reduction will be applied to the salary payments during the remainder of the county fiscal year.

Date

Signature

Printed Name

State of Texas
County of Travis

Before me, the undersigned authority on this day personally appeared _____,
_____ (position held), known to me to be the person whose name is
subscribed to this Affidavit; acknowledged to me that he/she executed it as his/her personal act and
deed in his/her official capacity, as stated in this affidavit.

Given under my hand and seal of office, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Public in and for Travis County, Texas

Printed name: _____

My commission expires: _____